

SENATE BILL REPORT

SSB 5578

As Passed Senate, March 13, 1999

Title: An act relating to the state toxicology laboratory.

Brief Description: Enabling the bureau of forensic laboratory services.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on State & Local Government (originally sponsored by Senators Patterson, Horn, Costa, Honeyford, Kohl-Welles and Kline; by request of Forensic Investigation Council).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: State & Local Government: 2/10/99, 2/15/99 [DPS].

Ways & Means: 2/24/99, 3/1/99 [DPS (SLG)].

Passed Senate, 3/13/99, 43-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON STATE & LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5578 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Patterson, Chair; Gardner, Vice Chair; Hale, Horn, Kline and McCaslin.

Staff: Sharon Swanson (786-7445)

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5578 as recommended by Committee on State & Local Government be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Loveland, Chair; Bauer, Vice Chair; Brown, Vice Chair; Fairley, Fraser, Honeyford, Kline, Kohl-Welles, Long, McDonald, Rasmussen, Rossi, B. Sheldon, Snyder, Spanel, Thibaudeau, Winsley and Wojahn.

Staff: Bryon Moore (786-7726)

Background: The State Toxicology Laboratory supports prosecutors, coroners, medical examiners, and law enforcement by performing drug, poison, and alcohol testing for death, impaired driving, and other criminal investigations.

Funding for the State Toxicology Laboratory is currently appropriated to the University of Washington from the Death Investigation Account.

Summary of Bill: All powers, duties, and functions of the State Toxicology Laboratory are transferred to the Bureau of Forensic Laboratory Services (Bureau) of the Washington State

Patrol. Any appropriations made to the State Toxicology Laboratory for carrying out the powers, functions, and duties that are transferred is credited to the Washington State Patrol.

The Washington State Forensic Investigation Council (Council) oversees the Bureau and, in consultation with the Chief of the Washington State Patrol or the Chief's designee, must control the operation and establish policies of the Bureau of Forensic Laboratory Services.

The Council must:

- approve the Bureau's services budget prior to its formal submission to the Office of Financial Management;
- prescribe qualifications for the position of Director of the Bureau of Forensic Laboratory Services;
- submit a list to the Chief of the Washington State Patrol of qualified candidates to serve as Director of the Bureau;
- appoint a toxicologist to serve as State Toxicologist;
- set the salary for the Director of the Bureau of Forensic Laboratory Services.

The Bureau is authorized to provide all necessary toxicology services requested by coroners, medical examiners, and prosecuting attorneys. The Washington State Forensic Investigation Council must assist the Bureau in devising policies to promote the most efficient use of laboratory services.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: July 1, 1999.

Testimony For: Basically, this bill provides a structural change with enormous benefits. There is joint oversight occurring already so officially moving the facility makes perfect sense. This will provide a tremendous benefit to law enforcement.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: PRO: Chief Annette Sandberg, WSP; Dan LaRoche, WA State Sheriffs; Dr. Barry Logan, State Toxicologist; Tom McBride, WA Assn. Pros. Attys; Larry Ericksen, WA Assn. of Sheriffs and Chiefs; Debbie Wilkie, WA Assn. of County Officials.